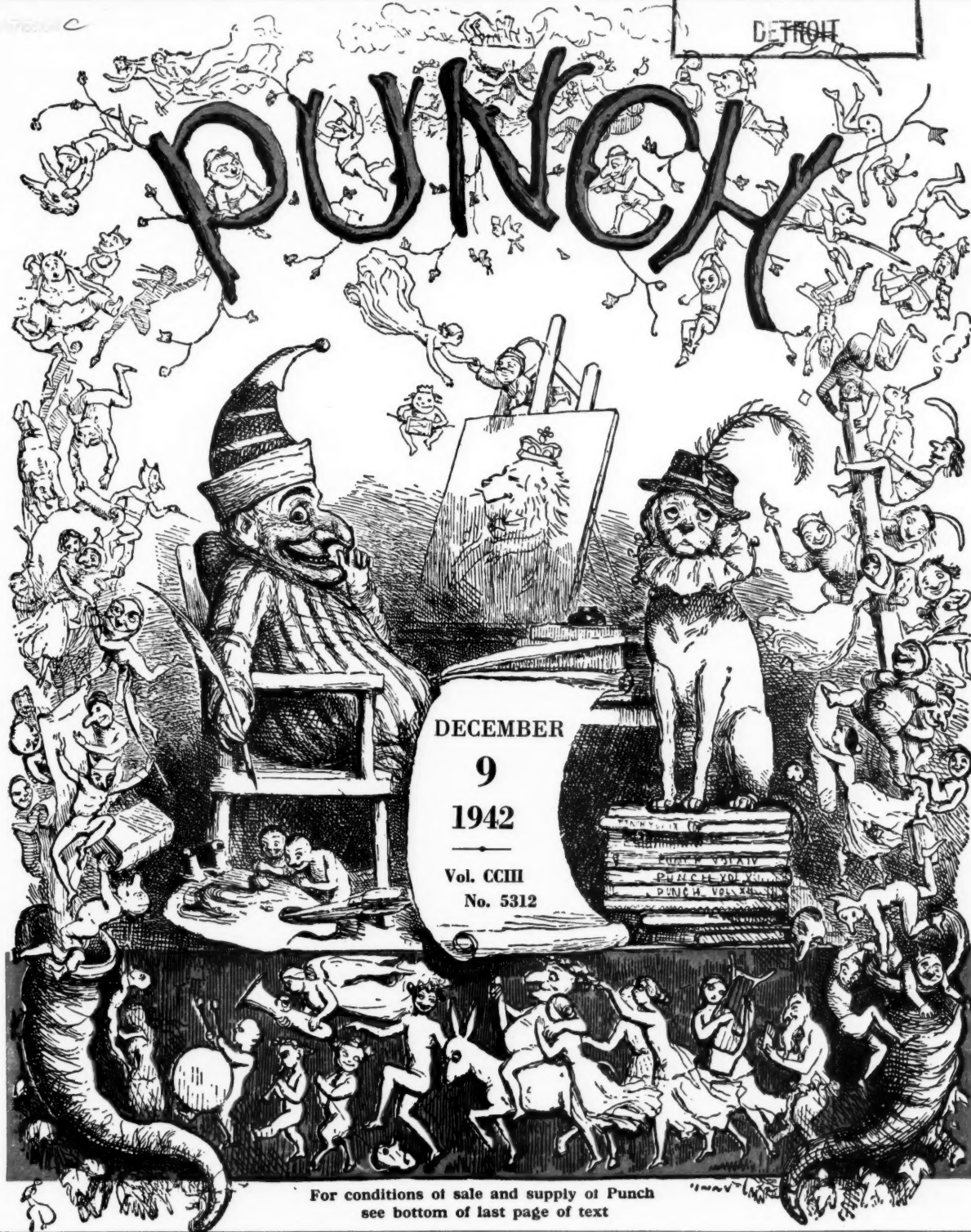


★ Remember **CADBURY** means quality

JAN 9 - 1943

DETROIT



DECEMBER

9

1942

Vol. CCIII
No. 5312

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED

CAR & GENERAL INSURANCE L^{TD.}
CORPORATION
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DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

If a doctor finds a patient has pyorrhœa it is a simple matter to send him to a dental surgeon. But when a doctor comes across some foot ailment, for example *hallux valgus*, his course is not so easy. Hospitals, often understaffed, are taxed to capacity with more serious work.

Yet the patient with *hallux valgus* may quite well be a skilled technician, whose disability is hindering an important war job. Without exaggerating, you could multiply this instance by thousands.

In fact, would it not be true to say that in providing palliative treatment and appliances for common foot-ailments, doctors are in something of a dilemma?

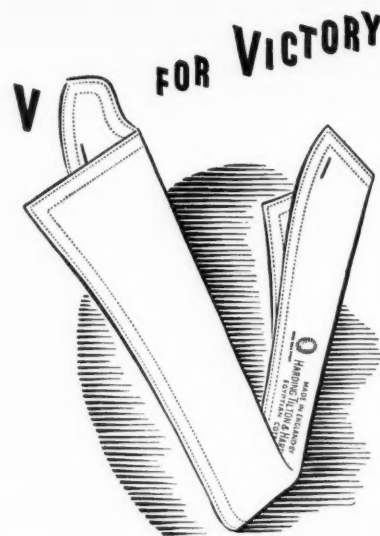
We have already said in one of these announcements that we would like to see the Ministry of Health put foot-care on a national basis, so that foot-inspection for war workers becomes a matter of routine, just as it is in the Army. But that has yet to come. Until it does, surely it would seem reasonable for the medical profession to make the fullest possible use of the Scholl Organisation.

We are skilled makers of foot appliances and corrective hosiery. Materials are released to us by the Medical Board. Not only do we carry adequate standard stocks, but we can make special appliances swiftly and inexpensively to doctors' specifications. Our experience in equipping foot clinics can be even further developed in service to more and more factories.

Then, there are Scholl Foot Service Depots in most large towns. These are staffed by fully qualified chiropodists, skilled in fitting such appliances as the physician may order. We would like doctors to see them at work, and keep an interested eye on the progress of any patients they may send us.

If those in authority will respond to these suggestions, we know we can do much to help them improve the nation's foot-health.

Scholl Mig. Co. Ltd. 182-204 St. John Street, London E.C.1



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I specialise in replacing bristles in worn brushes. Forward your Ivory, Silver or Ebony brushes, when quotation will be sent by return of post.

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DOCTORS USE IT

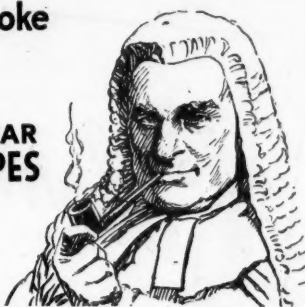
All shrewd Judges smoke

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the unavoidable shortage of supplies of their Products is causing disappointment—certainly the Products themselves have never been known to disappoint! Till easier days return, our best advice is the old motto: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

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British
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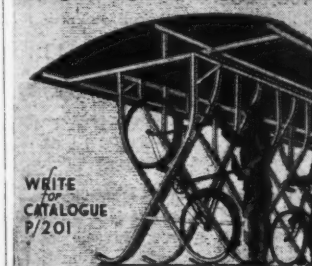
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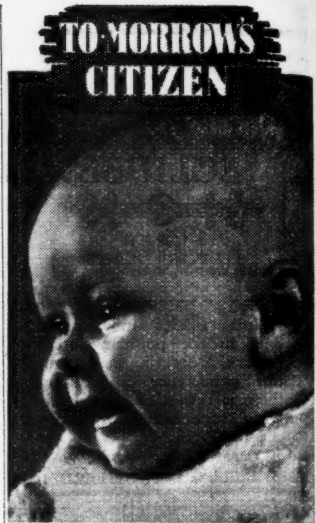


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"Babies love it."



Do your teeth pass the "TONGUE TEST"?

Do you feel a filmy coating when you run the tip of your tongue over your teeth? If you do, you need Irium—the new super-cleanser used in Pepsodent. The Irium in Pepsodent flushes film away and keeps it away by polishing teeth so shiny-smooth that film slides off. Change to Pepsodent today and see the brilliant change that comes over your teeth when dingy, stain-collecting film disappears for good.



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THE True VERMOUTH

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Treasures need seeking—but ask your Wine Merchant about Vamour—he may be able to supply you from his limited stock.



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VERMOUTIERS (London) LTD.
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CLOCHE GIFTS
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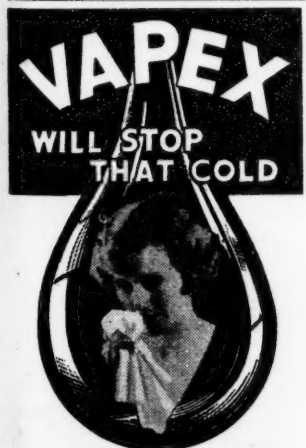


Gifts of Cloches will help your gardener friends to double Food-output and to enjoy fresh Vegetables the year round. But please order early!

LOW BARN
Half Set (10 Cloches), 30/6 (Scotland, 41/-). Carr. paid.
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Full list of Xmas Cloche Gifts sent on request.

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From your Chemist, 2/3

THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD.
A DROP ON YOUR HANDKERCHIEF

Nowadays we frequently have to use materials which are not of pre-war quality. Even so our skill and experience ensure that everything we produce is just as good as it can be in wartime. Our production of Utility Stockings (and of stockings not within the Utility specification) is limited, but supplies are distributed fairly among Aristoc dealers.

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(Rayon)

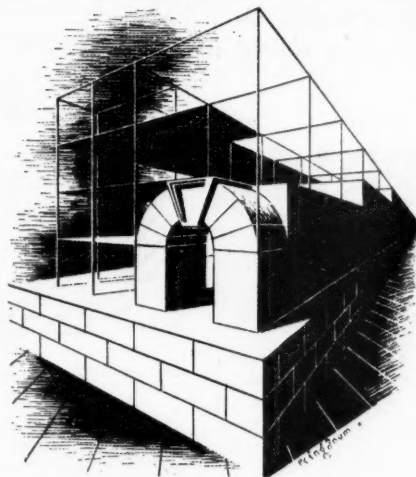
'ARISTILE'
(Lisle)



UTILITY
(Rayon & Lisle)

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THE ARISTOCRATS OF WARTIME STOCKINGS



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More than fifty years of ordered progress and purposeful development have laid the foundations on which Philips have built a great commercial enterprise. Its record of achievement and service, in peace and war, reflects the foresight of its builders and the stability of the structure they have created.

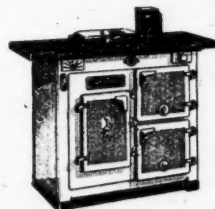
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20 Canning Place 17 Greenside Place 11 Dixon Street, C.1

"Now abideth Faith, Hope and Charity"

"The Greatest of These..."

The Church Army always endeavours to spread the feeling of good-fellowship between all. This Christmas it is making a special effort to bring to others that little extra cheer and comfort associated with the season.

Through the Church Army Huts, Hostels, Clubs and Cantens it will serve thousands of Service men and women.

It will also help the poor, the aged, the motherless children, the air raid victims and others.

Comprehensive work this. Will you please help with a liberal Christmas Gift?

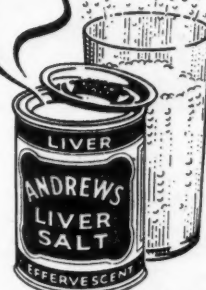
Cheques, P.O.s, etc., will be
thankfully acknowledged by—

CHURCH ARMY
FOR THE NEEDY

55 BRYANSTON ST., LONDON, W.1

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the Ideal
Tonic Laxative**

Excuse me—
ANDREWS
gives you
INNER
CLEANLINESS



When days are cold try Andrews
with the chill off

8 ozs. 1/10½, including purchase tax



Wisdom for War Time

THE saying "What can't be cured must be endured" comes home to us very forcibly in these days of restrictions and shortages, and we do well to accept its simple philosophy. So if and when your favourite biscuits fail to come your way, give quiet thought to what may be the reasons. Saving of shipping space, saving of fuel, saving of man-power, saving of transport, all play a part in restricting the output and distribution of biscuits, but they are factors which we feel sure all will readily appreciate.

Remember

McVITIE & PRICE BISCUITS

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'Second to None'

GREYS CIGARETTES

Just honest-to-goodness tobacco

20 for 2/- * 10 for 1/-

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LIMITED IN THEIR 99th YEAR

brave new world..

We are fighting for a brave new world; it is equally true that we are fighting to preserve many good ways of life that we had brought to perfection in the days of peace.

Nigh on three generations have been delighted and sustained by the flavour, the nourishment, and the sheer quality of Heinz Pure Foods.

Stocks of Heinz are not so plentiful these days for obvious reasons. Foods of the "quality first" kind are not in bountiful supply and Authority has first claim upon Heinz products to feed the fighting Services and build the National Reserve.

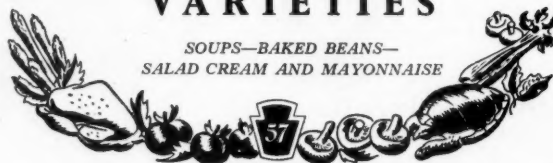
So — let us be patient. In due time the wide delicious choice shall be ours again at will.

HEINZ

57

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SALAD CREAM AND MAYONNAISE



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RUNCY

or
The London Charivari



Vol. CCIII No. 5312

December 9 1942

Charivaria

MUSSOLINI, it is stated, has not been himself for some time. We tender our congratulations.

Antiques, it is declared, are growing in popularity as gifts. In future we shall go to the past for the present.

A science note explains that some mountains in this country are actually a foot higher than they used to be. Everything seems to have gone up since the war.

War Baby

"LARGE Boat-shaped Ivory Pram, black mohair hood and apron, for sale, 16 guns."—*Provincial Paper*.



Civil disturbances, riots, and strikes have figured in world news recently. Anybody would think there was a peace on.

The Merry Widow is to be revived in London. The FUEHRER's generals fear a trap and haven't told him.

"Do you prefer spinach to turnip-tops?" asks a writer. No — and we don't prefer turnip-tops to spinach, either.

An artist remarks that the majority of people look older than their photographs. Well, the majority of people are.



Things Which Might Have Been Expressed Differently

"Mrs. P. —, despite her many appearances in Salcombe, was received with renewed enthusiasm by the audience."

Provincial Paper.

"Being in a position to give freely adds greatly to one's enjoyment at Christmas," says a writer. One method is to undo a few waistcoat buttons.

A correspondent recalls that some years ago income-tax demands were delivered by pigeon-post in a U.S. mountainous district. Income-tax rebates are still delivered by storks.

An astrologer says that when he joined the Army as a recruit he did not attempt to foresee what would happen to him. But everything did.

Talking about Christmas, one can hardly help being struck by the number of people who are anxious to deny themselves luxuries this year. If only they can get hold of any.

Referring to large windmills being erected in Germany, a Berlin writer says that cheap power can be generated all over the country from wind, whichever way it blows. Even up?



The armoured train HITLER uses on the Eastern Front has an engine at each end. Just in case.

"The Italian Navy will not retreat," says a Rome broadcaster. After all, it's not amphibious.

HITLER is shaved daily by a military barber. If he should nick the FUEHRER's chin he hastens to apply a swastika-shaped piece of sticking-plaster.

Want and What Not

ONE of the difficulties of Sir William Beveridge's great scheme for pensions and insurance is that it does away with the happiest moment in the lives of millionaires. No millionaire worth his salt ever started life with more than fourpence in his pocket or in any better-paid job than that of a Fleet Street newspaper-seller.

How the great man rose by enterprise and devotion to duty to be a crime-reporter, a racing tipster, a house-agent, a maker of bottle-stoppers, a company promoter, a manufacturer of patent medicines and an amalgamator of soap combines until he found himself at last the owner of three yachts, a racing stable, five country houses, the daughter of a Peer, and two newspapers, is a story which has been told over and over again in a hundred novels and half a dozen autobiographies.

On the last page the millionaire always observes "And the happiest period of my life? I think it was when I was a ragged boy in the streets with fourpence in my pocket and no likelihood of getting a decent meal or a night's lodging."

Sir William's scheme also does away with the book I was beginning to write in which, having risen from the gutter to the giddy heights of opulence and importance, the millionaire through rashness or imprudence or some unorthodox interpretation of the laws of the realm gradually goes down all the rungs of the ladder that leads to destitution until we see him as a compositor, a printer's reader, even a mere editor, and in the end a tired old man, again with nothing but fourpence in his pocket trying to sell the newspapers that once he managed and owned. "And the happiest moment of my life?" he murmurs to an inquisitive reporter. "It is now, sir. Don't bother to pay me for the paper if you haven't any change. I'll make you a present of it." When all these new allowances for children and increased benefits for old age come into being a beautiful book like mine will be impossible, and I ought to be able to get some compensation from Sir William Beveridge for the financial loss which I shall suffer.

But while Sir William has been planning for the next world-peace I have been planning for the next world-war which should begin, I suppose, in 1965, or thereabouts. So thick a veil of secrecy (as they call it) will descend upon Europe at that time that the war will have to be declared, I think, in a secret session of Parliament, in order to conceal our first moves from the enemy, and the public will not be told what has occurred. All citizens who are not wanted will be arrested and interned. The others will be removed at night to factories and distant camps "for a work of national importance." The B.B.C. and the newspapers will point out that the increase of the income-tax from twenty-one to twenty-two shillings in the pound is a "natural result of economic organization necessary to preserve the structure of peace." There will be a black-out all day as well as a black-out all night. Sailors will be dressed as soldiers, and soldiers as sailors. Tanks will be camouflaged as furniture-vans, aeroplanes will fly so high that ornithologists can be put up to pretend that they are merely flocks of migrating birds. Photographs of masked statesmen stealing into doorways will be published with the legend underneath them "Lord — relinquishes his post as Creator of Delirious Illusions without portfolio to take up his duties as Administrator of Fantastic Speculations with Deputy Cabinet rank."

It will be a criminal offence to suggest that anything except absolute peace is going on, and finally the Cabinet will discover that owing to the vital necessity of preventing information from reaching the enemy they neglected to reply to his ultimatum and he, owing to his desire to deceive us, neglected to send one. And further, that to conceal the point at which they intended to make their first moves, neither side has committed any hostile act against the other at all and is not proposing to do so.

And then there will not be any war. And a good thing too.

Four lines of verse printed in *The Times* last week seemed to suggest that Sir Richard Grenville of the *Revenge* would have particularly admired the action of the French Fleet which scuttled itself in the harbour of Toulon. Possibly. But in my opinion naval actions, however gallant, are often exceedingly different one from another. Thus the battle of Salamis was not at all like the battle of Syracuse, and the battle of Actium did not resemble Trafalgar in the least. And among minor unlikenesses between the fight of the *Revenge* and the blowing up of the French Fleet I would point out—

That the French Fleet presumably obeyed the orders of its Admiral,
That it did not go to sea,
That it put nearly all its men ashore,
That it was not captured by the enemy.

Or to put it the other way round—

Sir Richard Grenville refused to do what Sir Thomas Howard told him to do,
He took his crew aboard though most of them were sick with fever,
He fought a sea-fight,
He refused to have his ship scuttled, died a prisoner, and the *Revenge* went down with a prize crew on board.

The main resemblance is that the opinions expressed by Sir Richard Grenville about the Spaniards were probably much the same as the opinions expressed by the French sailors about the Nazis—allowing for a slight difference of idiom. On the other hand the Spaniards were much more polite than any German has ever been or is ever likely to be. But I think the action of the allied cutters which went into Oran harbour would have pleased Sir Richard more

I have been trying to think of a plot for a good new British film. I have got the title already. It is called

A TYKE AT GROTON

Groton being the most fashionable and exclusive school, I gather, in the U.S.A. I want Mr. J. B. Priestley to write the plot, and to show how the rough heartiness of a simple Yorkshire lad is at first revolted by, but eventually succumbs to, the rarefied social atmosphere, strange customs, and curious etiquette of his schoolfellows.

Mr. Charles Laughton is to be the Yorkshire lad and Miss Hedy Lamarr will be a matron's daughter, if they have matrons at Groton. Or perhaps the headmaster's wife. It is all rather in the air at present.

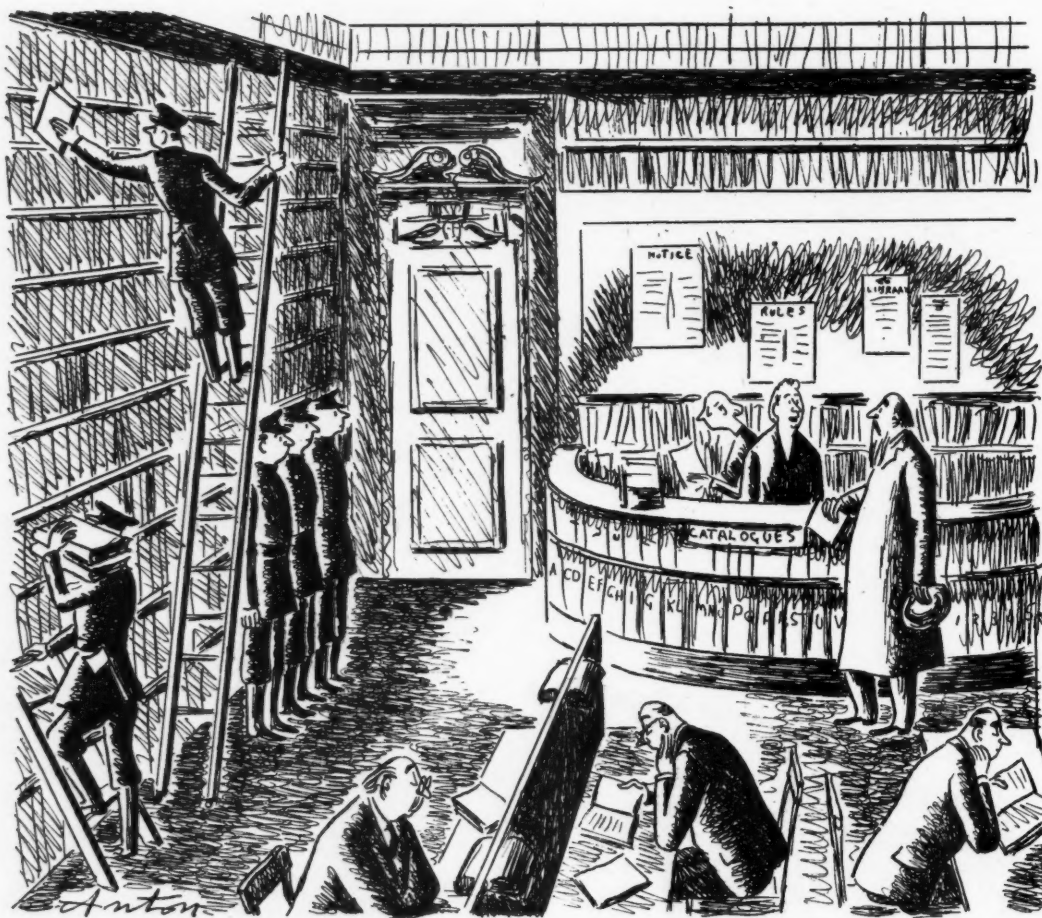
By streets and avenues and porches
I grope around when day is done
Possessor of a thousand torches
But batteries for none.

EVOE.



TRANSFORMATION SCENE

"Avaunt, foul sprite! and be no longer seen
I'll have you know I am the Fairy Queen!"



"Well, the firemen need the practice and WE need the assistant librarians."

Molesworth or Little by Little

Contains: Diary of cads, big bullies, kanes, new masters, grandmothers and other bits of gen.

Oct. 18. Arive back late in term after weedy harvesting it is tophole to be back at good old st. cypranes agane i don't think. molesworth 2 haf low morale viz blub bitterly against ropes in jim. propergander i sa skool days are happiest in life and he repli if this happiness give him stalingrad every time. Chiz fotherington-tomas comfort molesworth 2 with wizard sweets. Dercid to blub loudly but only get conduc mark (animal crys) fuste of the season. Tell jenkins but he sa shut up swanking he haf already 10 i.e. slack, yorning in chapel, stink bombs in prep and bad maners (7). Small but prickly thistle in matrons bed and so to innercent sleep.

Oct. 19. Morning bell viz all boys leap from bed at thort of breakfast cheers cheers squadrons of sossages take off from plates and spoons zoom mightily MASTERS sneke in guiltily with yellow faces. Carry out begning of term inspektion skool dog new bugs skool pig and dirty dick

gardners boy all O.K. Test skool dog with trial conker which land in target area but am disgusted to find NEW MASTER who regard me venomously. He sa Hi you what your name: when i sa molesworth 1 he sa Har! i haf heard of you. Tremble tremble try old wheeze i.e. look ashamed but no go get 3 conduc marks and when i sa gosh 3 sir that a bit stiff he smirk and sa since i not satisfied he will give 4. This is skool record so thank him perlitely and ooze off to chass new bugs.

Oct. 20. 4 gosh i mean to sa gosh chiz.

Oct. 24. Pla tough footer blues v whites and new master pla he wear red shirt v. girlie chiz he shout get it out to wing peason when peason get ball which is always as he best player. I pla strong but cool game at right back and hack everbode inkluding new master tough tough am human goriller. Unfortunately molesworth 2 dribble round me chiz and am so disturbed i take pot shot into own goal

as fotherington-tomas sulk becos he not captain. Cheers cheers new master too exorsted to make comentors or adminster blip. BEER?

Oct. 25. Canot get over molesworth 2 dribling round me.

Oct. 28. More chizzes. Get bored with geog prep (italy) and add new patent touches draw 1000000 bombs very beatiful also mussolini the jackal who shake hands with new master. Gosh shadow fall on paper bones freeze behind me is new master who say Har got you and deliver weedy bonk with daily express. He sa piktore show remarkable talent who is man who shake hands with fasscist diktator. i repli another tyrant with a face like a nanny gote and get tough blitzing chiz. molesworth 2 highly delited he shout go it sir chitty bang bang he is a fule.

Oct. 30. Start to write wizard book Kanes and Tweekes i haf Felt by n. molesworth.

Oct. 31. Get down to chap. 1 (sorts of kanes twitchy swishy bendy dog-headed etc) when fotherington-tomas come up he sa i am sorry you haf been in such hot water molesworth 1 old man would a conker that is conkerer of 43 be of any use? i repli absolutely none old horse buzz off but chiz as he press BOOK into my unwashed hand. Read it he sa it may bring comfort and skip weedily to give crumbs to ajacent birds. Look at book viz eric or little by little but no germans g. men spies, toughs or flying forteresses ect chiz. Spend quiet half hol scrapping with peason also mob juniors who sing cristopher robin at buckingham palace which molesworth 2 conduc he is an absolute swankpot. Recive wizard bruise on knee and do famous limping.

Nov. 3. Still canot think how molesworth 2 got round me at footer.

Nov. 5. Guy Forkes day. Old englishe festival. BONK.

Nov. 7. Weedy french viz papa rat now in pritty pickle in the woodshed it seem he will haf to turn and fight it out cheers cheers but chiz sentence 6 puss fall in well. deaf master roar with larfter very funny i must sa. Find BOOK eric or little by little in desk and cunningly read several chapters not bad.

Nov. 9. Finish BOOK am deeply impressed.

Nov. 12. Purchase cheap rat from dirty dick gardners boy very fine specmen. peason advise new masters bed and molesworth 2 sa how about eating it but do not think. Dercid on good aktion viz give rat to skool dog he won't get one anyhow else but chiz as skool dog zoom off with rat to mr trimp (headmasters) study. Tremble tremble all boys to asemble in big skool who is culpritt who haf pute rat in coal skuttle? Prepare to look innercent but rember eric and zoom to feet. Sir sir it is i who haf played cruel jape. All boys are amazed viz peason fall backwards and molesworth 2 sa coo golly. Get 6 not worth it really. Good deed write to gran and describe nature.

Nov. 14. i think i must haf slipped just as molesworth 2 approched with ball.

Nov. 15. Grate day as mr pankhurst who was master at st. cypranes come back as flight leutenant (r.a.f.) all boys sa gosh look and ask feeble questions viz. how many haf you shot down sir? mr pankhurst sa about 10 but chiz as molesworth 2 shout sez you and zoom away he is feeble and think he finest pilot in the world becos he shoot down chickens, rooks and skool dog ect. jenkins sa Hope you will come back after war sir but mr pankhurst sa no jolly fear and dig matron in ribs. New master sa 10 very impressive total for oficer in stores branch. Can he be jealous?

Nov. 17. Read eric agane and confess to matron about thistle. Recive conduc mark which too light a punishment for sin i haf committed.

Nov. 18. Peason sa Whats up all this confessing it is

feeble. i repli peason peason you haf not yet read eric take the volume it will give you comfort. Do touogh writing viz chap 2 (bending over) but chiz as peason come up he confess he haf pinched 6 mars bars from my locker last year. Gosh i mean to sa. All boys now read BOOK and when mr trimp sa Who haf pute footer boots on skool pig whole skool confess chiz they are copy cats. mr trimp grately upset.

Nov. 19. Gran arive at skool as she haf been deeply disturbed by my letter about nature she think i am ill. Grate event folows as new master zoom up in a bate he think i am buying fruit from applewoman (gran). Gran highly delited at prospekt of row with somebody. She sa Har are you not the son of my old butler who pinch the sherry go away you nasty little boy. New master retire with tale between legs gosh what a story. Fight all night not to tell peason.

Nov. 20. 10 out of 10 v.g. much better for geog from new master. Significant?

Nov. 22. Give molesworth 2 BOOK to read as he haf large bag of sweets. He sa not bad but he prefer all about love also eat all sweets. What is the use? Thro book at molesworth 2 hit deaf master and zoom away to skool pig. Boo to eric and everbode else.

Nov. 23. i must haf taken eye off ball.

the end.

o o

Songs of the Censorship

Petronella

I AM longing to write of your eyes,
Petronella,
The heavens were never as blue.
I am urged to declare
How your features compare
With the sun, and the clouds, and the dew.
But were I to mention the skies, Petronella,
The Censor would take a poor view.
He'd be sure to cut out
Any item about
The weather—it's strictly taboo.

If I kept off the personal tack, Petronella,
And sang of the sea, of the shore;
Of bright yellow sands
Where we'd trip and take hands
And courtesy (who said that before?);
The letter would boomerang back, Petronella,
My rhyme would be wasted once more;
I'm informed that it's banned—
It shows Fritz where to land;
That topic makes Censorship sore.

I think it will be much the same, Petronella,
Whatever the subject I choose.
It seems nothing's worse
As a medium than verse
For giving the enemy news.
As for prose, I consider it tame, Petronella,
Unsuited to amorous views;
My ideas would sound flat—
There's no future in that—
So good-bye! (And good-bye to my
Muse.)

At the Pictures

"A YANK AT ETON"
(EMPIRE)

MICKEY ROONEY at Eton is one of those brilliant ideas which warm the mind for a few minutes and are then, if the mind is of normal capacity, discarded. A comic genius, no doubt, could have made something of it, but of genius there is no trace in *A Yank at Eton*, and of talent only so much as was necessary to reproduce in a modern setting the stock characters and situations of Victorian school stories.

Timothy Dennis (MICKEY ROONEY) is a wild lad, with a heart of gold which takes some time to make its presence felt. Uprooted from the States, because his mother has remarried in England, he crosses the Atlantic in a rebellious mood. The amenities of his step-father's country-house jar on him, and when his step-father, *Roger Carlton* (IAN HUNTER), takes him to Eton he listens reluctantly as *Mr. Carlton*, pausing in front of the college, speaks of Eton's long history and the wars and famines she has survived. Almost at once *Tim* falls foul of a bigger boy, *Ronnie Kenvil* (PETER LAWFORD), a member of Pop, and soon the only bright spot in his life is the loyal affection of the *Earl of Weeld* (RAYMOND SEVERN), a small boy whom *Tim* calls "Inky," and who is shyly pleased by this nickname, for no one had given him a nickname before.

Things come to a crisis during the holidays, but under the wise and kindly handling of *Mr. Carlton*, *Tim* begins to soften. On returning to Eton he is moved by the spectacle of members of Pop marching along chanting the Eton Boating Song, and when his housemaster quotes JEFFERSON to him and speaks of a union of American enterprise and English tradition, he is fired with a determination to get into Pop.

Meanwhile, *Ronnie Kenvil* is following the usual course of the bad boy in school stories, breaking out after dark, stealing his housemaster's car and

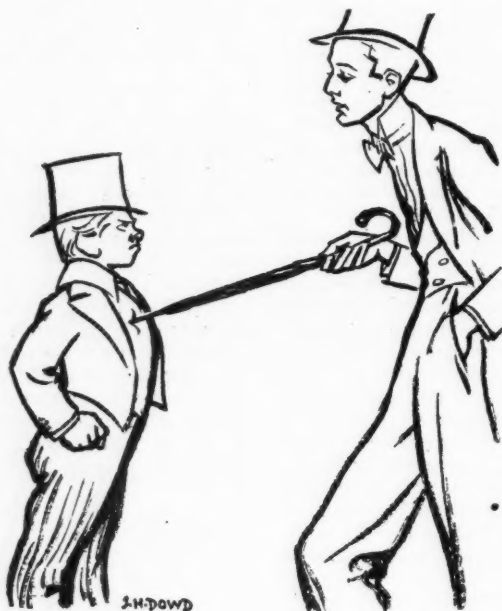
getting drunk, Suspicion falls upon *Tim*, who, believing the real culprit

to be his step-brother, suffers in silence—and so on, and so on.

The film ends with *Tim* in Pop, bawling for a fag and capering about in a manner which suggests that the union of American enterprise and English tradition is still at some distance from its consummation.

"MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH"
(CARLTON)

The one advantage of being poor in a rich country is that one may be certain of kindly treatment in fiction or on the stage. That is the least the prosperous can do for the needy, and so they do it. In this version of perhaps the most popular of American novels, all the poor characters, young and old, handsome and hideous, are good sorts; all the others, excepting a beautiful young girl and her lover, are greedy and callous. Within the limits of this convention, the film is excellent, and FAY BAINTER, as *Mrs. Wiggs*, a mother with five children to support, makes even the most threadbare situations real and moving, as when she rejects the Christmas turkey which two social workers present to her together with a request that she should hand over two of her children to be brought up in a charitable institution, or when she is summoned to the death-bed of one of her children from a show for which she and her family had been given free tickets. The strain of the main theme is relieved by *Marcus Throckmorton* (HUGH HERBERT), the proprietor of a matrimonial bureau, who, finding that he cannot make a living by marrying off other people, wcos his only client, *Miss Tabitha Hazy* (VERA VAGUE), a spinster neighbour of *Mrs. Wiggs*. The wedding takes place in *Mrs. Wiggs's* front room, and her husband, who has been looking for gold in Klondike, returns as the marriage ceremony is about to begin, and jumping to the wrong conclusion stumbles away into the night, like *Enoch Arden*. *Marcus Throckmorton* is genuinely amusing, and the various complications he introduces dilute the sentiment of the story to a palatable strength. H. K.



[A Yank at Eton]

"LESS CHEST, PLEASE!"

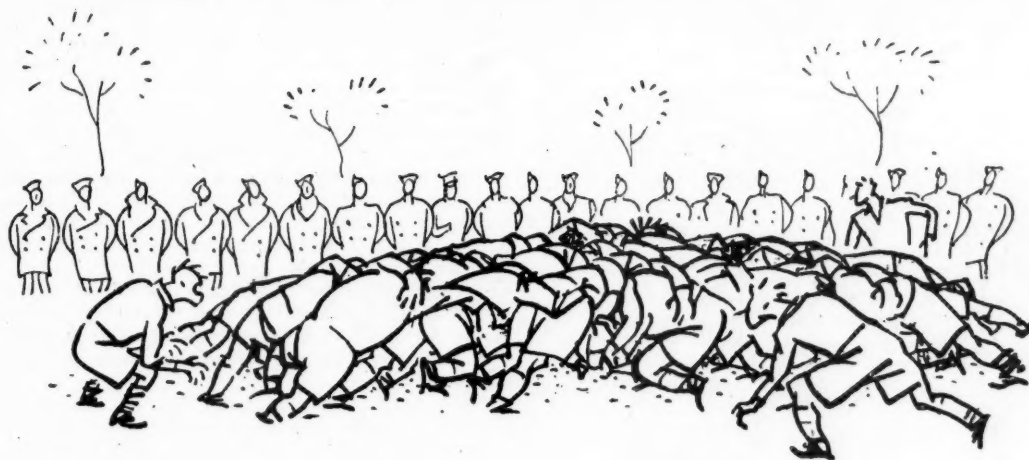
Timothy Dennis MICKEY ROONEY
Peter Carlton FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW



[Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch]

HAPPY THOUGHT

Mr. Throckmorton HUGH HERBERT



"Will you let the ball out, you lazy lot of cows—with the exception, of course, of Captain Burton-Slugsby and Second-Lieutenant Crump."

Prelude and Performance

VIII—The Neighbour

JOHN, Mrs. Bowen came in again this morning about that trowel."

"Oh, dash the woman. I never knew anyone make such a fuss about a little thing. You'd think it was the only trowel in the world."

"I know; but the Bowens are like that. Pernickety isn't the word."

"It's bound to be somewhere. You can't lose a thing the size of a trowel. I'll have another look on Saturday."

"But it's Saturday they want it. Mr. Bowen is digging up the big border."

"A nice hash he'll make of replanting it too."

"Well, I think you'd better go in and see them, darling. After all, he does give you a lift to the station. We can't afford to quarrel with them."

"Oh, all right. For heaven's sake come and support me then."

* * * * *

"Marion, did you go in to the Ponsonbys about my trowel?"

"Yes, I did. They haven't found it."

"Well, I think it's absolutely disgraceful. They just haven't taken the trouble to look, that's all. You can't lose a thing the size of a trowel."

"They're terribly careless people."

"I've a good mind to tell Ponsonby that I can't take him in to the station till he finds my trowel. Casual people should be taught a lesson."

* * * * *

"May we come in? We hardly dare face you because the trowel *still* hasn't turned up in spite of all our hunting. John is simply miserable about it."

"Oh, don't worry, please. Things just do disappear, don't they? It'll turn up again."

"But Mr. Bowen must think us so dreadfully careless."

"Not a bit, Mrs. Ponsonby, not a bit. Don't give it a thought."

"I'm most awfully sorry, Bowen. I hear you wanted it by Saturday, too."

"Oh, that doesn't matter a scrap. I thought I'd dig up the big border sometime, that's all."

"Well, if you plan it as well as you did last time you won't do so badly. It was a magnificent sight."

"Very nice of you to say so. By the way, I shall have to catch our train earlier to-morrow morning. That suit you all right?"

IX—The Telephone

"If that telephone rings once more

to-night I shall say something very rude."

"I just shan't answer it."

"And if it's Peggy I shall tell her that if she isn't tired in the evenings, I am. It's all very well for her—canteen twice a week and W.I. working-party once. She doesn't know what war-work is."

"And when she does ring up it's never about anything important. Only village gossip really."

"Of course she's the most appalling scandal-monger. Really I shall have to say something to her one of these days. It's sheer mischief-making..."

* * * * *

"What did I say? Shall I go or will you?"

"I'll go. . . . Hul-lo—hul-lo, yes? That you, Peggy? Hold on, I'll get her. . . ."

"Darling . . . I was hoping you'd ring up. How are you? You've had an awful day?—Oh, my poor sweet, I am sorry. . . . Canteen and W.I., and Annie's day out—how frightful! You know, I do think you do too much. You really must take care of yourself. . . . Did you? . . . No, I hadn't heard. . . . it's not true! . . . she *did* then! . . . yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . My dear, tell me more. . . ." M. D.



* "They'll tear you limb from limb, Sir."

C.A.N.T.

(Off Greece)

WE looked at the cloud
And someone on the bridge
Said "Was that thunder?"
Another peal as loud—
And from its lower edge
(So soft and white that it had made him wonder,
Who spoke, the day being cool and clear,
And Zante, on the beam,
Cloud-dappled and as lovely as a dream)
There came a seaplane, sweeping like a bird
So low and near
That we could see the *fascas* on her wings.
Indeed, it was not thunder we had heard
(It was not thunder weather)
But three fleet fighters going hell-for-leather.
With roar of guns out of the cloud they came
And we—who'd often longed to see such things—
Cheered wildly when a little tongue of flame
Licked round her cock-pit; grew; enveloped all;
So that her fall
Was hymned by the wild cheers.
It was no time for tears;
Yet, when the splash
Quenched the bright flame, and left poor wreckage of the
crash
Then suddenly the shouts died on our lips
And silence came among the grim grey ships;
While Zante, on the beam,
Cloud-dappled lay, as lovely as a dream.

H. J. Talking

SOME people cope effortlessly with flag-sellers, but not when the seller is my wife. She always has flags with very long pins and hurls them like darts at the lapels of passers-by. If they hesitate to pay she poises another flag between her fingers and with a mirthless smile remarks, "First time lucky," this causing the customer hurriedly to buy her off. Flag-selling, indeed, is her principal hobby, and she will travel miles to any place where they are indulging in same, usually inviting her bosom friend as a spectator. This bosom friend is called Little Martha Hemmingway, and she has a wide knowledge of unusual disasters, telling us revolting tales of solitary harpists whose hands get fixed between the strings so that they starve to death, and shepherds smothered under leafy branches laid on them by benevolent but over-enthusiastic eagles.

Little Martha Hemmingway has the curious delusion that she is loved by all who know her, this being indeed far from the case, and among those who take a low view of her charm, I myself am. A habit of gesticulating as she talks is particularly offensive to me, as she wears very large bangles, and when she raises her arms these slide down and get wedged on her biceps and have to be tugged off; she expects all men present to tug them for her, and as she wears upwards of twenty on each arm and many of these have projections and get mixed up with others and have to be disentangled, a conversation with her is arduous in the extreme. Another reason for my antipathy is the fact that I knew her when young and at parties she always minced to the front and recited a poem called "A Frisky Little Lambkin, I," and this she did from the age of five, the last occasion being at her wedding-breakfast, which was a poor wedding-breakfast owing to her old nurse taking charge of the proceedings and pouring out the champagne into the glasses the night before. This old nurse was very tyrannical and it was some years before she gave consent to the match at all, which she finally did only on receiving a written pledge from the bridegroom that he would see Martha took her cod-liver oil daily and a hot drink before going to bed; but being a rather stupid man he became confused and it was hot cod-liver oil that Martha had to drink before retiring, he considering the pledge binding in the extreme.

One reason why my wife is proud of this friendship is that Little Martha Hemmingway has had many different

CROMWELL SAID:

"WELL, your danger is as you have seen. And truly I am sorry it is so great. But I wish it to cause no despondency, as truly I think it will not; for we are Englishmen."

The danger is as great as when Cromwell spoke. But what of the men, the living wall that shields us? Night and day, on gale-swept shores, high above the clouds and on the seven seas, with danger ever present, they watch. It is little enough that we can do to ease the hardships borne for us with such gay courage. Little enough—but have we done that little? Have YOU done all you can? A contribution to-day to PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bourverie Street, London, E.C.4, means cheer for these gallant men.



"I'd like your opinion of some rather neat concealed traps we built near here, Sir . . ."

occupations and is full of useful reminiscence. Her first post was conversational assistant at a hairdressers'. The operative staff were rather taciturn and it was her duty to be responsible for six cubicles and trip up and down making remarks, and when all six customers were returning her leads active in limb and tongue is what she had to be. She next opened a beauty-parlour for men, where rich office-workers could have their faces weather-beaten at considerable expense. She next became a Practical Inspiration for a feminist society who used to buy her various unusual positions so that they could boast how women could do anything men did, and among such posts were butler, all-in wrestling referee and director of the Bank of England.

My wife once got involved with a Hidalgo as the result of answering an advertisement about teaching the sewing-machine, which is what the Hidalgo wanted to be done to him, and my wife contracted so to do on the condition that he supplied an interpreter; but one of the troubles was that this interpreter considered that he knew far more about the sewing-machine than my wife did, and insisted that it could be trained to do crochet and could also be adapted to gambling. During the first four lessons the two of them wrangled incessantly while the Hidalgo tried to attract their attention, but it was only during the fifth that he managed to explain that owing to carelessness with his dictionary he had said "sewing-machine" when he meant "harmonium," and after that it was quite all right as the interpreter owned he had never managed to play this instrument with both hands at once, while my wife could not only do this but use her feet as well.

This Hidalgo, while at home in Spain, had read many of the novels of H. G. Wells and had been fired with the desire to live the life they vividly described, a life so different from anything he had known. Braving the displeasure of his family he had fled to England and was now systematically fitting himself for the Enchanted Society described in *Kipps*.

My brother Coot, who used to be in education, tells me

that apart from the danger of personal violence the chief trouble is that most of a teacher's time is not spent on teaching at all but on notes and marks. Notes are very trying because some think that before you give a lesson you should write down everything you are going to say in a book, but it is very difficult to know exactly what you are going to say as (1) you may find that nobody knows what you said last time so that you have to say it again, (2) your pupils may ask you questions on the most unexpected subjects and if you do not reply they will think you don't know, (3) you may find yourself being rude to your pupils and that will not look well written down in cold blood. The trouble with marks is that so many things have to be done to them such as scaling up, scaling down, averaging, attaching them to a boy, etc. It is possible to spend most of one's time in such, and to help schoolmasters Coot once published a supplement for his *Schoolmasters' Friend* entitled *Marks for Every Occasion*, and this was as helpful to schoolmasters as a book of sermons to a vicar, though many continued to use the old-fashioned dice.

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Another Impending Apology

"If each farmer who is able would produce 10 more pigs, the population in Saskatchewan would be increased by 1,000,000 within the next 18 months, he said."—*Montreal Daily Star*.

o o

"General Anderson is making diversionary slicing thrusts into Tunisia in a three-prong drive."—*Daily Sketch*.

You have to know the knack.



DOGGERELS OF WAR—IV

*Slash
The Boche
With your old golosh!*



"No, I can't slip you an extry 'alf pint—not with 'im lookin'."

Whitehall at Dawn

BEFORE dawn
(on these winter mornings)
the charladies cross the river and settle on
Whitehall
like a flock of starlings
on a cornfield.

In rooms where, later in the day,
men will be directed by the Minister of This or
That
to refer to your letter of the something ult.
and to regret, etc.;
where vital matters of State will be under
consideration,
active consideration
and even, in an emergency,
urgent consideration—
there, at daybreak, *they* are in possession
with pail, broom and dust-bin,
driving the dust from where they left it yesterday
to where they will find it to-morrow morning:
like policemen moving on the traffic.

From 9 onwards,
in inverse order of dignity and importance,
the Civil Servants arrive;
but the charladies have finished,
they sit down to their nice cup of tea
and have a nice chat
about their sons in Libya,
their daughters in munitions,
their grandchildren in the country
and
of course
that Hitler.

Our American visitors are given a booklet
describing the peculiarities of the natives
of these islands
(the coldness, for instance, of our houses and our manners).
"But why,"
one of them said to me,
"was I never told back home about the greatest of your
British institutions,
the London char?"



SOMEBODY'S DARLAN?

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, December 1st.—House of Lords: "Tush! Tush!" to Hush-hush.

House of Commons: 2066 and All That.

Wednesday, December 2nd.—House of Commons: Reconstruction Again.

Thursday, December 3rd.—House of Lords: About Colonies.

House of Commons: The End of a Chapter.

Tuesday, December 1st.—Optimism—yes, optimism—swept over the House of Commons to-day. True, there seemed to be every reason, in the war news, for large doses—or waves—of that rather rare commodity. But it is not often these days that the Commons House of Parliament shows anything but the most cautious feelings of confidence, pleasure or approval about anything.

Yet here was optimism rearing its cheery head in all sorts of unlikely places, and Members who might have been thought to have lost the art (or science) of smiling were there giving what the music-hall mimics call a "slight impression" of the Cheshire Cat.

Sir JAMES GRIGG, War Minister, pressed about wasting the leisure time of hard-worked Home Guards, optimistically said that time was *not* wasted but *used*. Lady ASTOR super-optimistically proposed that the Government should "admit that it had made a mistake" about something. Captain WATERHOUSE, with superlative optimism, said that "a considerable number of spares" were available for civilian wireless sets. Pleased with this essay into the realms of fantasy, the gallant Captain added that lots of utility furniture would be available in the new year.

Mr. VERNON BARTLETT, never a man who is lightly outdone, reached the very topmost pinnacle of optimism by announcing that landowners would be delighted to have people collect "blown timber" from their land, in these days of fuel shortage.

After that the tide rather receded. Still, it was nice to have the cheery atmosphere, even if it did seem a bit forced at times.

Major CHARLES TAYLOR asked a question in which he mentioned the "Commander-in-Chief of the General Staff." Everybody thought this a subtle reference to the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence—but Major

TAYLOR spoilt the illusion by explaining that he merely meant "Chief of the Imperial General Staff."

Ministers and Back-Benchers alike were intrigued to find that popular Colonel LLEWELLIN was still Minister in Residence at *Westminster*, in spite of his newly-acquired official territorial title as Resident in *Washington*. He seemed very much interested in Mr. GEORGE HICKS's announcement that he had collected 3,750,000 tons of iron railings in a year.



"EXCELSIOR!"

THE PAYMASTER-GENERAL

(who is responsible for co-ordinating post-war plans).

Enough, surely, to keep out (or in) quite a number of Germans and Italians.

Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, Leader of the House, promised (or threatened) yet another secret session, this time on North Africa, DARLAN, and all that. Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN mentioned that the country might think from the secrecy that the Government was up to some "trickery," but Mr. EDEN would not agree that this interpretation of the chronic state of secret session was justified.

Mr. EDEN and other Members had a "few words" over the alleged pre-release to the Press of the much-

heralded report by Sir WILLIAM BEVERIDGE on Social Services. He promised to look into the whole matter of publicity and to report back later.

Then, led by Mr. ARTHUR GREENWOOD in one of the best speeches he has made, the House went on to talk of the near and distant future of the world in general and of that part which owes allegiance to the British Crown in particular.

Sir WILLIAM JOWITT, "Minister of Reconstruction," made a long speech covering (as one Member put it) the whole future, foreseeable and otherwise. As he has not spoken before in the many months of his period in office, it was doubtless distilled essence of speeches. He took great care to keep to his brief—and read every word of it in clear tones.

He announced another forthcoming protean act by the Ministry of Works and Planning (formerly the Office of Works, and after that the Ministry of Works and Buildings), which is to turn part of itself into a Ministry of Town and Country Planning.

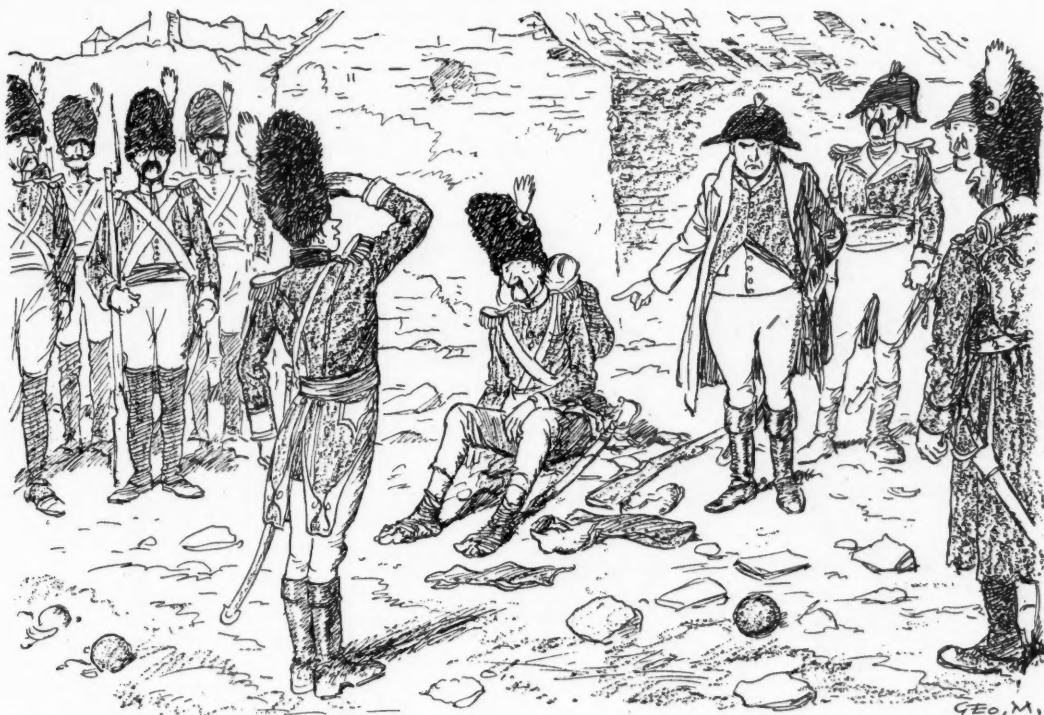
A crusty (and crusty) Tory was heard to comment that it only now needed someone to plan the planners, and all would be well—or well-ish.

Their Lordships had quite a piece to say about the Government's passion for secret sessions. They are much less partial to the exclusion of the democracy than are their elected brethren of the Lower House.

So when Lord CRANBORNE, in the matter-of-fact tones born of habit, suggested a secret session to debate naval aircraft, objecting Noblemen did some effective dive-bombing. Lord CORK AND ORRERY warmly protested that the idea was an insult to his discretion, but Lord CRANBORNE suavely replied that the secrecy was needed for the Government's reply, not for the complaints or compliments—or whatever Lord CORK was to offer.

Lord CHATFIELD, supporting his fellow Admiral of the Fleet, blew the gaff on the Government by saying (out loud) that Ministerial statements in secret never contained anything that could not perfectly well be said in public.

Lord CRANBORNE blushed, like a conjurer who has been caught with the rabbit prematurely exposed. Lord MARLEY, Lord HANKEY, Lord ADDISON and Lord WINSTER all joined heatedly in pointing out the unhappy animal. Lord WINSTER said, in his cheerfully cutting way, that secret sessions were



"A case of gross insubordination, Your Imperial Majesty. This man says he'd sooner march on his stomach."

now used for political, and not for security, ends, and "corroborated" (as the country inquest reporters have it) Lord CHATFIELD on the nature of the "secrets" given at sessions bearing that alluring title.

But of course the secret session *was* held. Which means that your scribe can have no "Impression" of it.

Wednesday, December 2nd.—Mr. NOEL-BAKER, of the Ministry of War Transport, informed the House that

Mr. Brown (of London Town)—give the chap his dues—

Never gets impatient, and never breaks the queues.

His tribute to the inhabitant of the bus-queue, not only in London but everywhere the species exists, was sympathetically cheered by the House.

Major MONTAGU LYONS got stern about the non-running of trams in Leicester. Told that there was no guarantee that they would run, he announced with finality that if they did not he would raise the whole matter on the adjournment. There was

quite a "curfew-shall-not-ring-to-night" air about him, too.

Then Mr. WILLIAM MABANE of the Ministry of Food did a little Black Marketing of his own. Caught without the written answer to a question, most Ministers would have stammered and asked for renewed notice. Not Mr. MABANE. He seemingly knows all the answers—written or not. So he improvised a reply which floored his questioner. Not content with thus exceeding his ration, he handed out replies to "supplementaries" which completed the knock-out.

In response to the applause, he admitted that he "was glad to answer questions." Which, as the estate agents say, is almost unique.

Then the House went on to talk some more about reconstruction, with Mr. ANTHONY EDEN making the curtain speech. And a very fine one it was too, with the vision of youth and the caution of age neatly combined, balanced and projected.

The Select Committee to consider equal compensation for men and women was set up. Five women are

included in the fifteen members of the Committee.

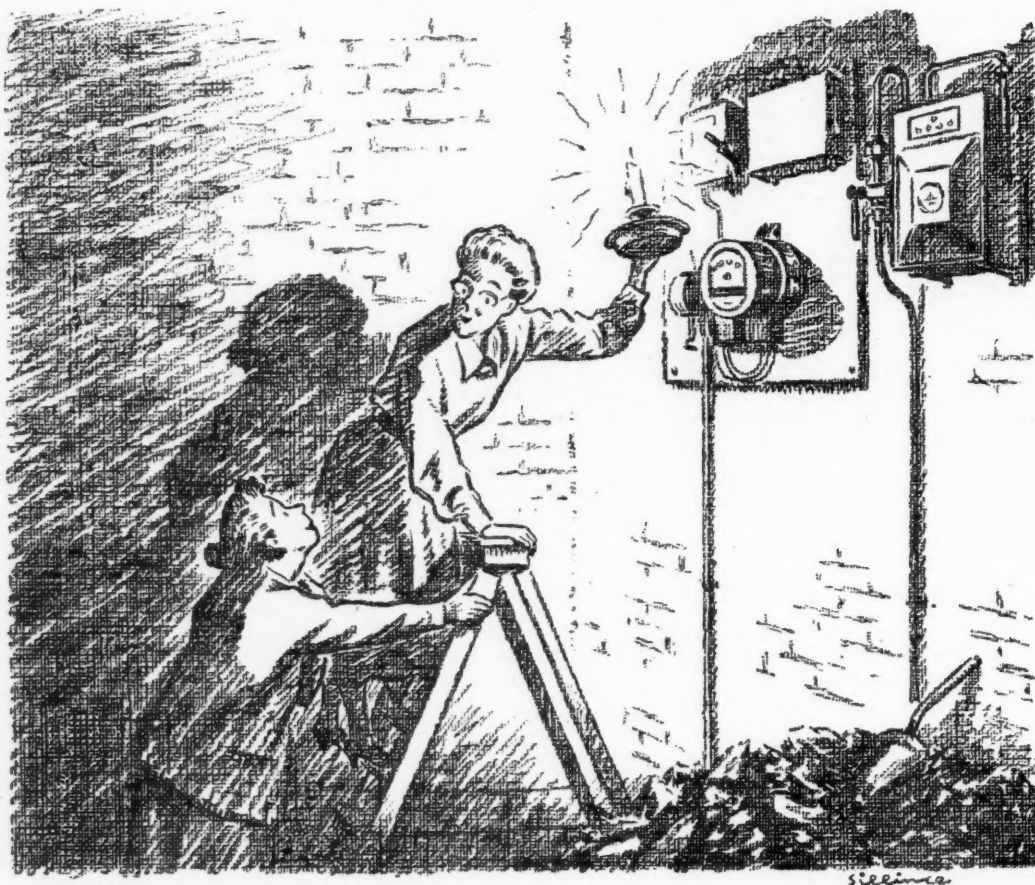
Thursday, December 3rd.—Mr. EDEN announced another secret session in the coming sittings, this time on North Africa and Admiral DARLAN. Which was perhaps a good reply to a Member who wanted to know why more people did not buy *Hansard*. A novel with most of the chapters blacked out is never so interesting.

Lord CRANBORNE, in the Lords, gave an interesting survey of the birth, growth and general development of the British Empire. It seemed to be a reply to somebody—or something—somewhere.

It was skilfully done, with the literary polish of the ancient House of Cecil. And many a listener must have gone off murmuring (with Mr. TURNER LAYTON) "This is Worth Fighting For!"

Double-Faced

"Hitler now faces his two fronts . . ."
Sunday Chronicle.



"We're doing splendidly—we've passed our fuel target already!"

More Tidework

RECENT events in Africa have strongly turned the public man's fancy to thoughts of the tide: and the good old "turn of the tide" has done its stuff in innumerable speeches and articles. Once more, then, we feel it our duty to discuss and, we hope, discourage the tide-users.

One especially noteworthy example was an article in a Sunday weekly by that distinguished public servant, Lord Hankey, boldly entitled "The Turn of the Tide." So fine and careful a writer deserves a close and respectful analysis. Let us attempt it.

The tide gets three mentions in the article:

(1) "... the battle of the Mediterranean

tends to confirm the impression that the tide may be on the turn."

(2) "Early in the fourth year the rise of Hitler's tide began to slow down. . . ."

We must pause here to note an important departure from conventional tide-practice. Hitler's tide, you see, is a rising tide. Presently (we hope) it will be High Water. The tide will then turn at last—and ebb. And that, it seems, will be the tide that leads us to victory—the ebb. All right. We have ourselves observed before that it was the ebb, more often than the flood, that took our fighters and manufactures on to the high seas and carried our fathers to fame and fortune. But then, you see, Shakespeare, and nearly

all other public men, see the flood, not the ebb, as the tide that leads on to fortune. It matters not, one way or the other, as long as we are clear which we mean—and stick to it.

The third passage in Lord Hankey's article deserves more attention. It is the peroration:

(3) "It is well to remember that the tide tends to haver at the turn; that the exact moment is not easy to discern, and after the turn there is sometimes an unexpectedly big wave; that the ebb takes as long as the flood; but on a steep beach it seems rapid. Let us hope and pray for a steep beach leading on to sunny sands."

We gasp. We hardly know where to

begin. Perhaps we had better begin with "haver" in the second line. "*The tide tends to haver at the turn.*" A misprint, we assume and hope: for "haver" is a Scottish word meaning "to talk nonsense"; and we never heard a tide tending to talk nonsense yet. Lord Hankey, surely, is not one of those who think that "haver" is the same as "hover"?

Let us proceed. "*The exact moment is not easy to discern.*" Well, yes and no. It is not easy to discern over a wide area, because the "exact moment" at different points is different. But with favourable conditions—smooth water and a tide-gauge, for example—it is easy enough at any given point. Lord Hankey has only to stand on London Bridge at slack water and keep his eye on a bit of timber "havering" below; and he will be able to spot the exact moment when it starts moving down-river again. And, after all, it is quite easy to discern the "exact moment" when the tide turned in Egypt the other day.

But why should Lord Hankey risk catching cold on London Bridge in this research? The time of High Water (not quite the same as the turn of the tide, we admit) has been fixed by Nature and recorded by Man in books. (For London Bridge, Lord Hankey has only to look at *The Times* each morning; and for any other part of the world he can consult the appropriate almanacs.) From the programme laid down Nature diverges seldom, not much, and in special circumstances only. We clever mariners, having the books and charts, can predict within a few inches what depth of water there will be at any given point and time. But Man can do nothing whatever to alter the depth, the current, or the date.

This chastening consideration it is that makes the tide so nonsensical a metaphor for the shifts of war, war being contrived and controlled by Man—especially GerMan. Few things amuse us more than Hitler's anger at the refusal of everybody to admit that he has yet done anything worth talking about. He conquers and overruns an entire continent, occupies half Russia; and the cosmic comment is "Oh, that's nothing. You wait." This annoys him very much. But he must come near carpet-biting stage when he reads the speeches about the "turn of the tide": for this suggests that, however far his armies go, natural processes are bound to push them back to where they started from. And, of course, for once the little beast is right.

Observe what a mess Lord Hankey tumbles into as he develops his

metaphor. "*After the turn there is sometimes an unexpectedly big wave.*" The implication seems to be—must be—that after the turn of the tide there is, in general, a cessation of waves. Just one big unexpected one, perhaps: and then calm. We know of nothing to justify this. What we do know is that if the wind is blowing contrary to the new direction of the tidal stream—"wind against tide"—there will be not one big wave, but a prolonged succession of them. Waves all the time—until the tide turns again.

"Until the tide turns again." *As it must.* That is, or should be, the sobering thought. Few of us could say off-hand to-day how often the tide has turned in Libya; yet the pundits still continue to talk as if the tide turned once only and for all time.

Lord Hankey does try to sober us by his remark that "*the ebb takes as long as the flood.*" (He might have gone further and said—"sometimes a couple of hours longer.") But even he does not seem to ask himself what will be the position when the ebb is over.

Well, that is not perhaps quite fair. He appears to contemplate that Nature will then stand still and the waters remain where they are. For we are to pray for "*a steep beach*" (making the ebb "seem rapid") "*leading to sunny sands.*"

But look here—half a minute! Hitler's tide, you remember, has been rising—bearing, sweeping him on to victory. Now it is going to ebb, and it will be our turn. We follow that. But that means, surely, that the ebb will now bear us in the kindly current to victory? Not a bit of it! In Lord Hankey's picture, apparently, *we are not on the water at all.* And don't propose to go. All we want is to get on to "*the sunny sands*" when the water falls. But this is, surely, a little feeble for a great maritime nation, eager to pursue the right, carry the torch, and so forth. However, there we are, sitting on the sunny sands, enjoying the fruits—or, seaweed—of victory. But what happens, I cannot help repeating, *when the tide turns again?* Or won't it?

* * * * *

It will now, we hope, be generally conceded that, for war-purposes, the "turn of the tide" is an erroneous and misleading figure of speech, for it ignores the well-accepted truths that

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

(a) British victories are not inevitable, (b) Nature is not on our side, and (c) that tides go on turning all the time. But we see our statesmen's difficulties and should like to help. The swing of the pendulum is no better—for the pendulum comes back too. Stars? No. They go round and round. Eclipses? They don't last. What about the wind? There are winds fair and foul; there are prevailing winds. You might say that after a long spell of adverse winds there has been a shift to a favourable quarter. But why say any such thing? Even that makes it look like luck.

A. P. H.

The Mixture—As Before?

"I cannot but remember such things were
That were most precious to me."

Macbeth.

HE writes, a man whose word I trust,
In genial tones and hearty
The casual news that he had just
Come from a cocktail party.

A party. Cocktails. Fair and soft
Those distant words come to me,
In the old days familiar oft
When life was rich and roomy,

When we would meet and bandy views
Foregathered with one's cronies,
Inspired by those alluring brews
And nibbling small polonies.

The diehard might no doubt display
A preference for sherry,
A beverage which I'm free to say
Was palatable, very.

But cocktails had some secret grace
For each divine creation;
Gin was, in general, the base;
The rest was inspiration.

I thought such times had vanished
quite,
Save when a fleeting memory
In the vast watches of the night
Make one all over tremor-y.

Yet something still remains, 'twould seem,
From which the soul may borrow
A new-built hope to shape one's dream
Of a reviving morrow,

When we may meet in Bacchic glee
And all grow wise and mellow
As, on a fair assumption, he
Was when he wrote. The fellow.
DUM-DUM.

At the Play

"HENRY IV: PART TWO"

(WESTMINSTER)

"THE WAY OF THE WORLD"

(MERCURY)

SHAKESPEARE'S *Henry IV: Part Two* has too much of serious history in it to allow us to call it the greatest of all the comedies. But most playgoers, when the rare chance of seeing it comes along, accord with the critics who say that it certainly contains the richest comic scenes he—or any other writer—ever devised. These are, of course, the tavern scenes and those depicting the visit of *Falstaff* to *Justice Shallow* in Gloucestershire. There is a wild rich unreasonableness in all that happens and is said here, a lack of order or of consequence in the speech and action, a quickness and a depth, an all-pervading colour of mortality, a drive, an impetus, a *Stimmung* of life being lived as intensely as it ever has been lived, an uproariousness in jollity, a quaintness in mirth, a happy continuity of glad conceits and relished surprises that make the pen of any writer who ever has to deal with this masterpiece run away with him—just like that!

The greatest Falstaffs, QUIN and HENDERSON, belonged to the eighteenth century, a period which must have found these scenes almost intolerably irregular. We find this kind of thing by an anonymous critic: "The plays of this author must never be ruled by the strict rules of Dramatic Poetry, with which it is to be imagined, he was not acquainted; and therefore to try him by what he did not know, would be trying him by a Kind of *ex post facto* Law; Regularity of Design being introduced in this country since the Decease of that great Genius." But *Falstaff*, greatly played, soon warmed up the cockles even of the eighteenth-century heart. He was allowed to be the one exception among all of SHAKESPEARE'S comic characters in that he was fully sustained throughout: "For indeed the character of Sir John nowhere flags, and he generally upholds a Propriety of Thought, if it be

considered in regard to the Manners of the Speaker. Bullying, Cowardice, Vaunting, Detection, boasted Activity, and bodily Indolence, Profligacy, and Pretensions to Decorum form such a party-coloured Grouse as moves our Laughter irresistibly; his Wit, and, on all Occasions, the Pleasantry of his Ideas, provoke us to laugh with him, and hinder the Knight's Character from sinking into Contempt; and we love him in Spight of his degrading Foibles, for his enlivened Humour and his companionable Qualities."

Between DOWTON at the beginning



RECRUITING SHADOWS AND RUNNERS-OFF

Sir John Falstaff MR. ROBERT ATKINS
 Silence MR. HORACE SEQUEIRA
 Shallow MR. MICHAEL MARTIN-HARVEY

of the next century ("a kindly fraternal warmth *glowed* through the oddities of exterior whim") and PHELPS near its end ("his Falstaff was wholly without unction or geniality") the character was seldom played and usually dismissed as "coarse." At the turn of this century came two good *Falstaffs* together—LOUIS CALVERT, who earned high praise from the best critics—those of Manchester, and BENSON'S *Falstaff*, GEORGE WEIR, of whom it was said that he made every playgoer sit back in smiling wonderment at the sheer prospect of such a mountainously comical man living and having his being on the stage before our very eyes.

Is it fair to apply such touchstones

to Mr. ROBERT ATKINS'S modest *Falstaff* at the Westminster? One submits, perfectly. It is all or nothing with this supreme character. One can readily understand why many comedians spend their lives wanting to play *Falstaff*, and in the end do not. To be so larded with humours, to have the gusto of a dozen men and override as plenteous a stageful of fellow-creatures as ever dramatist devised, to shout and roar and gurgle like a great baby, to cozen and brag like a great rogue, to be spurned in the end by the Prince turned King and to take disgrace and public ignominy with a pang and a sudden dignity—these things are no easy part of acting even for the man who has the necessary physical qualifications for their portrayal. Mr. ATKINS has breeding, clarity, momentum, and utters an almost continuous series of noises, half-chuckle, half-grunt, throughout everything which is said by everybody else. As always happens with the *Falstaff* who is rather good than great, he is not the king of the comics but just one of SHAKESPEARE'S crazy gang. We find ourselves laughing rather oftener at the *Silence* (Mr. HORACE SEQUEIRA) and the *Shallow* (Mr. MICHAEL MARTIN-HARVEY), though the latter is made a mere buffoon.

"Odious endeavours!" exclaims *Millamant* to her sedulous wooer, and odious comparisons—here again—must be evoked by any other player who essays CONGREVE'S peerless lady during Miss EDITH EVANS'S heyday. The comparison this time is not with the giants of the past but with an unforgettable precedent in our midst. It may seem unfair to clever and handsome Miss SONIA DRESDEL to tell her that she is not Miss EVANS. *Millamant* is a great part. It ought to be capable of being satisfyingly played in a variety of ways by a variety of actresses. Yet somehow it just is not. Miss DRESDEL only begins to be good where she resembles the great *Millamant* that stays fresh in everybody's memory. She never attains to that shimmering and majestic style, or those wonderful suggestions of a womanly heart beneath all the character's ravishing artifice. A. D.

Largesse

IT can now be revealed, without unduly upsetting the international equilibrium or giving away any vital secrets, that Second-Lieutenant Sympson and myself, after a long and hazardous journey, have arrived in Africa.

Personally, I am prepared to admit that I like the place, and I get on very well indeed with the natives. The fact is, I suppose, that there is something in my air and general bearing that tells them instinctively that I am not going to stand any nonsense. It is mostly the eye that does it.

Sympson, on the other hand, has had some most unfortunate experiences. We are in a rough-and-ready camp at the moment, waiting to move on to our final destination, and native boys hang about the place pestering us to allow them to clean our boots and our buttons. Most of us prefer to do our own, as at the moment we have nothing else to occupy our time, but Sympson, in a weak moment, told one inoffensive-looking boy that he could polish his boots, and immediately all the other boys surrounded Sympson's bed and scrambled for his possessions, which they began to clean, whether the things needed it or not.

Sympson expostulated as hard as he could, but he soon gave it up and went back to bed, where he smoked his pipe and watched them benevolently.

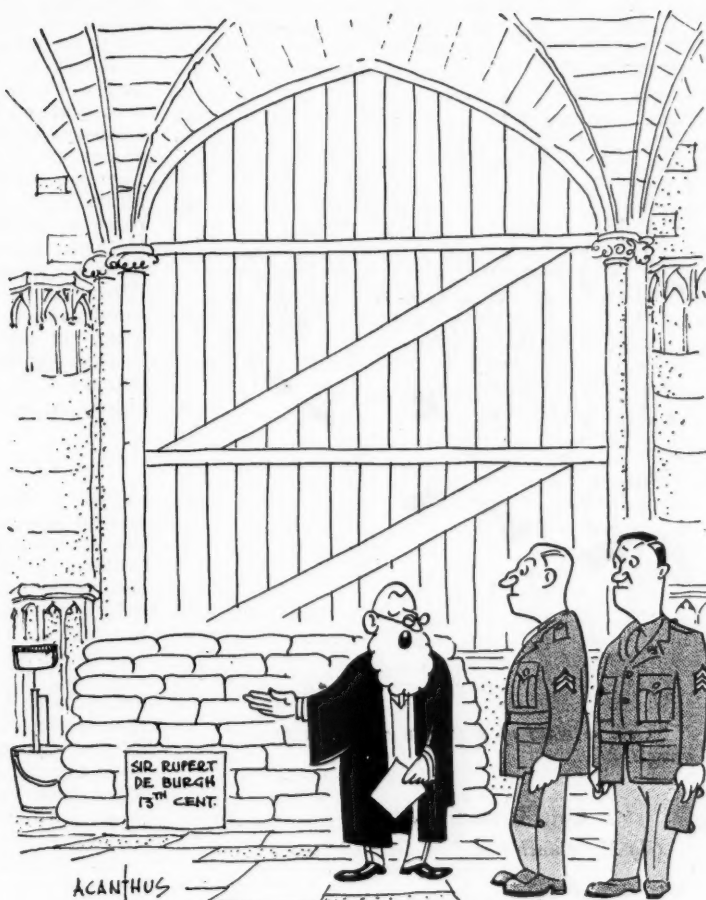
"After all," he said, "it makes one feel rather grand, having all these fellows at one's beck and call. Like the Arabian Nights."

Then, when they could not find anything else to clean, the boys approached Sympson with outstretched hands and glistening eyes, and on Sympson's face appeared the hunted look of a man who does not know how much to tip.

"I suppose ten bob *was* too much," he admitted to me afterwards, "but there were such a lot of them."

The news that Sympson was a man who dispensed largesse on the grand scale spread among the native population like wildfire. Going about with Sympson in the neighbourhood of the camp was like accompanying a film star. Eager dark faces surrounded him. Boys dusted his boots, seized anything he might be carrying, and showed a disinclination to let him out of their sight.

One day Sympson managed to get a pass into the neighbouring town, and he was accompanied through the camp gates by a grinning bodyguard of



"The stained glass is unique and the Crusaders' tombs among the finest in the country."

natives. Moreover, his fame had spread to the drivers of rickshaws and taxicabs that plied for hire outside. These unanimously ceased to badger other prospective customers and concentrated on Sympson.

"I had intended to walk into town," he said to me afterwards, "but a taxi seemed to give promise of escape from the mob, so I yielded to the most ferocious-looking taxi-driver and was whirled away."

In this part of Africa, however, the taxis go very slowly, and the natives run very fast. Sympson was still fumbling for change to pay the taxi-driver at the other end when his followers appeared over the brow of the hill.

"I suppose there were only a score or

so," he said, "but they appeared, to my fevered imagination, like a locust-drift. So I dashed for shelter into a cinema, where I saw a film that I had already seen in England in 1939 and certainly did not want to see again. So far as I can see the cinema is the only place I am safe, until after dark. But it seems rather ridiculous to come all these thousands of miles just to spend my life at the pictures."

Hamelin Town in Sussex

"A rat catcher employed by an Agricultural Committee has been sacked because he got so friendly with the rats that they willingly fed out of his hands."

West Sussex Gazette.



"Care to make up a four to criticize a game of draughts?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

England and Napoleon

If allowance is made for the quicker pace at which events move to-day, there is a remarkably close resemblance between our war against NAPOLEON and the present conflict. Our enthusiasm for the new order inaugurated in France in 1789 was warm at first, but when the French guillotined LOUIS XVI, and shortly afterwards invaded Holland, "to establish the natural frontiers of France," our growing uneasiness made us align ourselves with the Continental opponents of the revolution, and we declared war. Our army was negligible, our fleet was in a state of neglect, and we counted on our allies to deal with the rabble in Paris. Among our statesmen BURKE alone divined the formidable character of our opponents. "It is with an armed doctrine that we are at war," he declared; but it needed a long succession of disasters to bring this home to the rest of the country, and it was not until 1797, when the naval forces of our former allies were ranged against us, the Irish were in rebellion, our own fleet had mutinied, and our finances had collapsed, that we began to settle to our task. What others at this moment thought of our chances appears in a remark made to an English visitor by the great Russian general, SUVOROV. "Tweddell, the French have taken Portsmouth. I have just received a courier from England. The King is in the Tower, and Sheridan Protector."

Within a few months of the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, England had a reorganized fleet and a large army;

and in August 1798 NELSON exploded BONAPARTE's dream of emulating ALEXANDER in the East at the Battle of the Nile, which might have gone differently if BONAPARTE had not appropriated for his own use the most skilled gunners in the French fleet. His great powers were always being used to extricate him from situations into which he had been plunged by his lack of judgment. Thanks to the feebleness of the Directors in Paris and the slow mental processes of the English Government, he turned the Egyptian disaster to his own advantage, established himself as the dictator of France, and at Amiens made a peace with England which relieved France from our blockade, restored her colonies and gave BONAPARTE a breathing-space in which to prepare for our destruction. His refusal to allow us to trade with the Continent finally cured us of our illusions about him, and in 1803 the war broke out again. It is at this point that Mr. ARTHUR BRYANT concludes the first volume (*The Years of Endurance*, COLLINS, 12/6) of his most readable and skilfully arranged history of the Napoleonic Wars.

H. K.

Craftsman's Testament

"The artist," said an Indian thinker, "is not a special kind of man, but every man is a special kind of artist." It is therefore the artist's duty to speak up for his fellow-workmen. They too are thwarted artists denied their natural right to creative work; and this is a tyranny not to be borne, even if its victims have become too mechanized to resent it. The *Last Essays* (CAPE, 5/-) of ERIC GILL are mainly concerned with the freedom and responsibility of workmen. The human course, for their writer, was set heavenward; and he would have replaced the present trend of education—a job, any job, and a veneer of "culture" for your off-time—by something radically different. As a workaday Christian he was precisely the opposite of the industrialist who urges us to remember that the "comfort" we receive from Big Business is "the envy of other nations." GILL didn't want comfort any more than he wanted envy. He wanted austerity and peace. His objectives were long-range ones—no one realized that more than he did. But if ever the dignity of labour returns, we may remember the man who, after WILLIAM MORRIS, did most to bring the miracle about.

H. P. E.

Engaging Buoyancy

Admiral of the Fleet the Earl of CORK AND ORRERY has spent fifty-five years in the Navy, and if he had his time again he would repeat the choice. He last commanded a fleet at Narvik and his account of the fighting there should naturally be the final culmination of his tale of many encounters—*My Naval Life* (HUTCHINSON, 18/-)—but unfortunately an unkind censorship has intervened and he can say nothing more exciting of Norway than that the early spring flowers come swift and beautiful. Between 1914 and 1918 his most characteristic occupation was the patrolling of the Red Sea, with many brisk and uplifting interludes ashore taking part in lively skirmishes designed to further the cause of Arab freedom under LAWRENCE and FEISAL. In this kind of free and easy warfare afloat, ashore and in the air, he was infinitely at home, with mighty little malice on either side and lots of elbow-room for initiative with a sudden kick. At other times the Admiral has served in many waters, particularly in the Far East, and has seen things not vouchsafed to ordinary observers. He will long be remembered for his tenure of office as President of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. His book is not tensely framed to rouse emotion. It is cheerful, pleasant, full of old friendship and unfailing good spirits.

C. C. P.

Mordred Snape

He is exactly what you would expect him to be, with a name like that. *Mordred Snape*! A large shabby man with an overbearing manner that proclaims his weakness, a flamboyant, selfish, ill-tempered failure of a man. All through *Thankless Child* (HUTCHINSON, 9/6) he gives everyone connected with him a great deal of trouble and is very unhappy himself. Mr. FRANK SWINNERTON makes it difficult to ignore his bore, who talks too much, drinks too much, and is madly possessive about his daughter and his one crony, who pities him and whom he patronizes. For the characters do make themselves felt. The old, old game of cross-purposes when first we love is complicated here, of course, by the unspeakable *Snape*, but is itself as fresh and absurd as ever. There is a painter who is all that *Snape* is not, and so at last *Miss Snape* is free. So much for the book itself; but a book is not fully a book unless it is being read, and the reader of this one is likely to find other thoughts crowding in, thoughts apparently unconnected, thoughts about five inches of bath-water and fuel economy and rationing generally. He thinks how much his enjoyment would be heightened if his eyes were spared close print, and from that moment he is a demon at detecting the superfluous words that make close print necessary. Baths are just deep enough to be effective now, and there is no reason why novels should be extravagantly long.

J. S.

Three-Star Crime

If you can figure a detective novel conceived by Mr. JAMES STEPHENS and written by Mr. NORMAN DOUGLAS, with occasional dialogue by Mr. EVELYN WAUGH, you will get a rough idea of what we are up against in *The Daffodil Affair* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6), by Mr. MICHAEL INNES. Beyond urging you to read it, even if you have to steal, I want to say as little as possible about it in case I spoil the freshness of its flavour; for it is an odd and startling piece of delicatessen to find in the meaty earthbound larder of detective fiction. The presence of an Einstein of a horse between the shafts of a Harrogate fly would be enough, but its abduction to South America by a villain philosopher of Napoleonic ambition whisks us immediately into a different world, where it is not surprising to be joined by a haunted Bloomsbury mansion and a well-known witch about Yorkshire, both also abducted and neither much the worse for an Atlantic crossing. Those who want a crossword puzzle in eighty thousand words can turn away. Such strange material is not the stuff for your logical criminologist; it imposes gaps which can only be overcome by someone with the rare gift of imaginative welding. Mr. INNES has that. There is a brilliant madness in this book. I can say it is well written, it is ingenious, it is funny, but unless you read it you will still, I flatter myself, know very little about it.

E. O. D. K.

Husbandmen and Housewives

Taking for her motto the brave aspiration of WILLIAM PENN: "Let my children be husbandmen and housewives," MARJORIE MACK has written a gallant account of her family's adventures as working tenants of *Hannaboy's Farm* (FABER, 8/6). Her chapters work backwards from this war-time's present (twenty-two craters, two land-girls, and a couple of sons serving) to last war-time's past, when a young married couple took possession of a small dairy-farm perilously dependent on imported cake. The clues to their struggle (for struggle it is) are three—how so specialized an undertaking can survive government shifts of policy and popular shifts of taste; how far it pays for the mistress to

undertake outside work; and whether any farm whatsoever can hope to finance preps., public schools and universities for its children—or even whether so much extraneous "culture" is desirable. The reply of fate and the WILSONS to these questions provides act after act of touching and entertaining tragi-comedy, the highly idiosyncratic helps and hangers-on of the cast proving far more attractive than such wandering stars of the professional world as turn in to lend a hand. No one who shares the writer's properly apologetic tenderness for gipsies should miss "My Didekais."

H. P. E.

All in the Family

In the first chapter or two of *The House of Mrs. Caroline* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) Mr. C. M. FRANZRO hops not only from twig to twig but also among the brushwood of two family trees until we are inclined to say to *Mrs. Caroline*, whose marriage connected two Italian business firms, "A plague on both your houses." (And why, by the way, should a Piedmontese married to an Italian man of property be known as "Mrs.?"") However, after a necessary whittling away of unimportant relatives we become interested in *Serge*, the least accounted grandson of an indomitable old lady, and follow his school, university, journalistic, business and amatory adventures in Italy, China and London if not with excitement at least with some suspense. The story begins in 1900 and ends in 1933 when *Serge* has avoided war, won fame and learned more of politics and business than makes for the happiness of any man. By far the most interesting chapters in a book which holds the attention without gripping it tightly are those on China and Fascism.

B. E. B.



"Lieutenant Gable?—Never heard of him!"



"My mother opens all my letters."

"Mine doesn't—only those marked 'Private.'"

What Are You Sounding Now?

"YOU're Orderly Officer to-day," said Flight-Lieutenant Busby—"know anything about it?"

"Nothing," I said.

"Well, your first job is taking the Colour-hoisting parade. Know anything about Colour-hoisting parades?"

"Nothing," I said.

"Well, I should find out, if I were you. The 'March On' is at 0800, and it's 0730 now. I'll send you the Duty Trumpeter, and he'll give you the gen."

The Duty Trumpeter was a plump aircraftman named Stuffins. He stood respectfully to attention, his trumpet at the ready.

"So you're Duty Trumpeter?"

"Sir, yes, sir."

"I play the trumpet a bit myself. How did you come to be a trumpeter?"

A.C. Stuffins cleared his throat and said that he was actually a sheet-metal worker, but the Station Trumpeter was sick and he had been trumpeting for a month in his stead.

"I see," I said. "You'll have to tell me what goes on, you know. I've never hoisted any Colours before. I

suppose you wouldn't care to come out on the square with me now? Then I could get the hang of things in time for 0800 hours."

"Sir, yes, sir," said A.C. Stuffins, and stepped back to let me pass.

Outside, the world was swathed in fog. Great wreaths of it rolled over the parade-ground. A dim, dim radiance above the Station showed that the moon was high over Headquarters Buildings, and a dimmer streak over the cook-house marked the sluggish dawn.

"This way, sir," said the Duty Trumpeter—"you're walking into an air-raid shelter. That's it, sir. Mind, there's the flagstaff."

I pulled up just in time.

"Right, sir. Face the other way, sir, to start with. Now, when you come on, three squadrons, including an armed squadron, will be making three sides of a square facing the flag-staff."

I said I doubted whether I should be able to see them.

"Sir, no, sir. We 'aven't seen them the last five mornings. But they'll be there, standing to attention."

"I see. And what do I do?"

"You stand them at ease."

"And then?"

"Stand them to attention again."

"But—"

"Yes, they always do that. It's called proving the parade; sort of making sure it's in working order."

"Right. Let's try that. Stand at ease! Atten-shun!"

"Sir, louder, sir. Like this."

When the echoes had died away and the agitated billows of fog in the vicinity had settled down again, A.C. Stuffins said that it was the armed squadron that was the trouble.

"Trouble?"

"Especially in a fog. You got to remember, see, how they're fixed, else you'll be giving the 'Slope' from the 'Ease' or the 'Present' from the 'Order' or the 'Ease' from the 'Slope' or the—"

"Yes—er—well, we'd got to the 'Attention,' hadn't we. Then what?"

"Then you turn about, sir, and sing out, 'General Salute—Present arms.' Then the Duty Colour-hoister hoists

the Colours, the armed squadron presents arms, you salute, and I play on the trumpet. Like this."

Sheet-metal-worker-Temporary-Duty-Trumpeter Stuffins raised the trumpet to his lips and made the welkin ring to a hideously cracked and broken arpeggio that set every tooth in my head jangling and all but split my ear-drums. The final note slipped and staggered down three semitones before suddenly darting up to a shrill squeal.

"That's terrible," I said—"terrible! Why, I ought to put you on a charge for a noise like that."

"Sir, yes, sir. But the proper trumpeter's—"

"That's the only call you have to do?"

"Sir, no, sir. I do two more. One after the Salute, and—"

"Ye gods! Well—never mind. What do I have to do next?"

"Sir, yes, sir. Then, when the Colours are up, you turn about again and sing out, 'Order arms.'"

"'Order' from the 'Present'?"

"Oh, no, sir. Sorry, sir. I think it's the 'Slope' from the 'Present.' But of course, if you did 'Order' from the 'Present' you could go on and 'Slope' from the 'Order.'"

"Oh, I could, could I?"

"Sir, yes, sir."

"And then what?"

"Then I play another call, sir; a long one, like this—"

"No, no!" I said, almost striking the trumpet from his hand. "Never mind. I know the trumpet-calls. Looked 'em up in the Air Force Constitution Act. What do I have to do?"

"Well, sir, once you've got them to the 'Slope'—"

"Stop!" I cried—"what's that!"

We listened for a second. Unmistakably, it was the noise of marching feet. Louder and louder, approaching from all sides, the sound of marching men. Nothing could be seen, but presently the yells of N.C.O.s were to be heard. I distinguished a "Halt!" and the volume of sound diminished a little. Two more "Halts!" followed quickly, then more orders, then silence.

I must have looked very pale as I peered into the plump features of Stuffins.

"Sir, sorry, sir. Muster been that specimen call. They thought it was the 'March On,' sir."

"Do you mean to tell me they're all out there?"—I waved a trembling hand at the swirling yellow dampness—"waiting for me to start?"

"Sir, yes, sir."

"But this is terrible! How do I—?"

I threw a frenzied glance around me. Stuffins and I were alone with the flagstaff. "Stuffins," I said—"give me that trumpet!"

"Sir?"

"Hand it over! Don't you know it's a court-martial offence to disobey an order?"

"Sir, yes, sir."

"Thank you. And now you can carry on."

"Carry on, sir?"

"Look. You know all about armed squadrons. I don't. I can play the trumpet. You can't. A.C. Stuffins, carry on with Colour-hoisting parade!"

"Sir, yes, sir," said A.C. Stuffins, and filled his lungs with fog.

o o

Sacrifice

MRS. EMERY played triangles sweetly
And neatly
And fealty.

She studied with old Dr. Wheatley,

The flower of them all.

He told her "Suspend your triangle.

Let it dangle

And jangle.

Remove from your wrist that there bangle.

Now, let the strokes fall."

She studied and studied and studied,

Eyes bloodied,

Feet muddled,

Wrists aching, until with cheeks ruddied

She won her diploma.

The board of examiners swear

They declare

She's a flair,

A pervasive and most subtle air

(The Greek is *aroma*).

She played the triangle concerto

By Gerto

Roberto

Del Chili Con Carne Deserto

Entirely from memory.

But her husband said iron was needed.

He pleaded.

She heeded.

To her country the metal was deeded

By brave Mrs. Emery.

o o

Defeatist

"ILLNESS cause of selling remaining stock of Patent Medicines."—*The Advertiser*.

o o

"WOMEN CAN'T DO IT; TALK"

B.B.C. Broadcasting Programme.

Yet they try.

Rope

I DO not know why, but rope seems to arouse all the lowest instincts of coxswains in the Navy. A cox'n loves a nice bit of rope better than he loves his grog. He cherishes the issues of rope, the further issues of rope to replace that mendaciously logged as "Lost over the side" or "Parted when giving tow," and the ropes he wins when prowling about the wharf on dark nights. He stores his ropes jealously in secret places below decks, and periodically he will go down to croon over his treasures. No cox'n will ever be hanged; he will always have "half-inched" the rope from the hangman first.

My own cox'n is no exception. When he became a cox'n he automatically lost his conscience. At least, it may still operate in other directions, but where rope is concerned he is dead to the commonest honesty. He enters my tiny wardroom with a glint in his eye. I know at once what is coming.

"The X—, what tied up alongside of us just now, sir—" he begins.

"Yes?" I say, not very encouragingly.

He closes his eyes in ecstatic contemplation.

"She's got a lovely bit of manilla loafing on her deck."

"We've got all the manilla we need," I say severely. "Er—haven't we?"

"Always do with a bit more, sir. We've only got a coir-line out now for our back-spring, and you know what grass is like for a mooring—no ruddy use at all."

"That's true," I agree thoughtfully.

"Surely, though, we've enough manilla stowed away in the forepeak for a back-spring?"

A dogged expression comes into his eyes. The mother defending her young.

"No, sir. There's not much more than a fathom or two, and that's so rotten it would part if you tripped over it."

"I must say," I am compelled in honesty to muse, "it's remarkable what a lot of rope the X— always seems to have. Good stuff too—no grass for them."

"They never get it honest, I know!" says the cox'n virtuously.

"What size is it?"

"Six-inch, sir, and hardly a mark on it."

"I think I'll just come up on deck for a breath of fresh air," I say.

I do so and, really, it is shameful the amount of rope that the X— has. Lying about on deck in coils in the

most ostentatious way too, with possibly a couple of steel hawsers that I am prepared to swear she didn't have when she went out.

"There's no moon to-night, sir," suggests the cox'n, who has followed me.

"Looks as though it'll turn in cold too," I observe. "If you happen to be up on deck late to-night, cox'n—say, towards midnight—why don't you get our sentry to ask the X——'s sentry to step into our galley for a cup of cocoa?"

"I will, sir," assents the cox'n warmly.

I turn in soon after that, and when I go out on deck in the morning that enticing coil of manilla has vanished from X——'s deck. It isn't on our own deck either. I stroll along to the fore-peak, where I find the cox'n huddled down in the gloom, gloating over his latest acquisition.

"And you said we only had a fathom or two of manilla!" I charge him.

"Must have been mistaken, sir," he says, humbly.

"We'll take in the grass back-spring and put that out instead," I direct. "Later on, of course. The X—— is going out again this afternoon."

We do so. Before long I notice the C.O. of the Y——, berthed farther down the wharf, wander by and pause to examine my back-spring.

"I lost a manilla like this last week," he says. And he says it, moreover, meaningly.

"Bad luck," I say condolingly.

"In fact," he asserts, becoming specific, "I lost *this* manilla."

I explain to him that this is rubbish—that the manilla he is inspecting is, in point of fact, the one rope that has been in my possession longer than any other. He says that it is not rubbish. He cites points of identification, such as a splash of red lead just at the eye-splice, and deep oil-stain elsewhere. He hops on board, and unwinds the rope from the bitts, and triumphantly exhibits that oil-stain. He challenges me to name the length of the rope and, when I make a wild guess, gives me the length himself and, further, goes to immense pains with a tape-measure to prove it.

It takes the best part of a bottle of gin to soothe him. He goes away promising to come alongside us later in the day and resume possession of the rope.

"Now, sir, perhaps you see why I keep that grass for a back-spring," says my cox'n with mournful and dignified reproach.

And the Y—— does come alongside us, later on, and takes off the manilla. She also takes off one rope-fender and two heaving-lines of ours, the entire ship's company, from C.O. down to cook, standing in a row on the deck and passionately perjuring themselves that (a) they had put out the fender because we were too tired to do so, and (b) they had thrown our heaving-lines back to us the moment the Y—— was made fast.

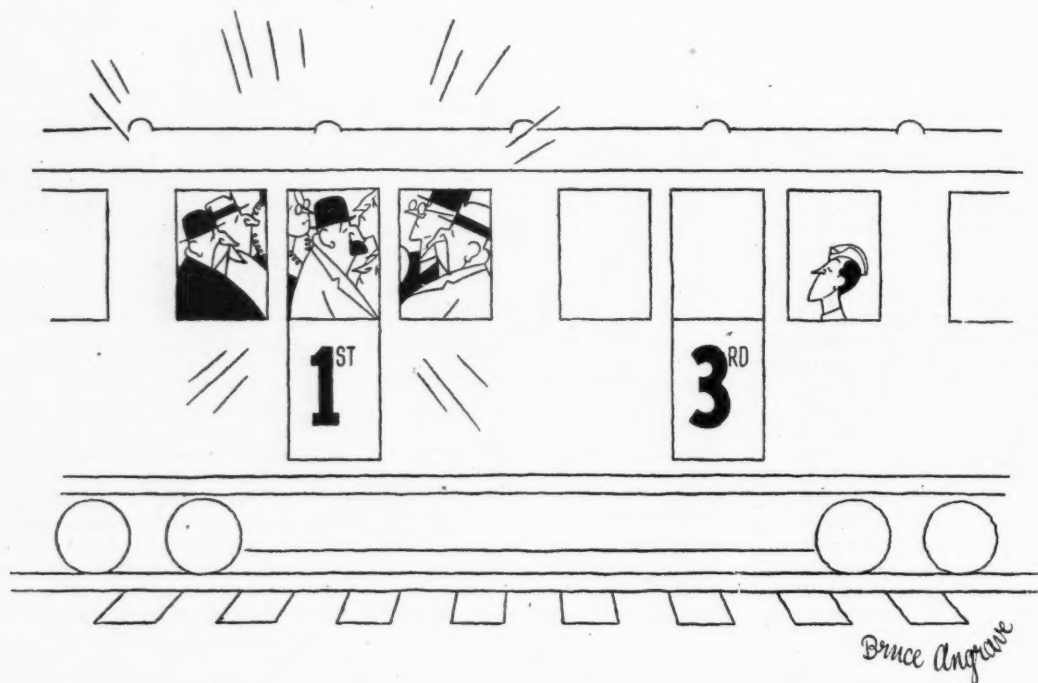
"Never mind, sir," says my cox'n comfortingly. "The Z—— has got a lovely bit of tarred hemp, and all they use it for is to tow the galley-mat astern to wash it."

A day or two later I am not really surprised to notice that we have a fresh mat in our galley.

Another Impending Apology

"The Mayoress made her last public appearance in this office, for which the W.V.S. are most grateful."

Provincial Paper.



Bruce Angame

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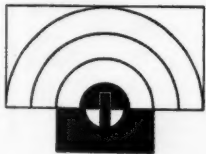
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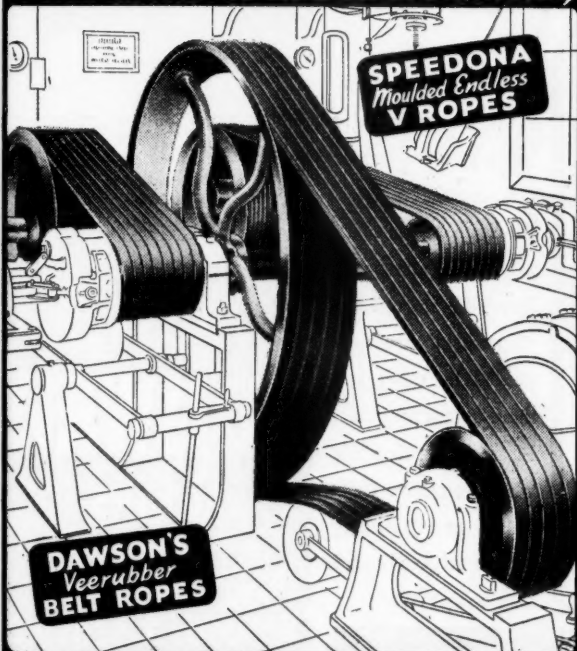
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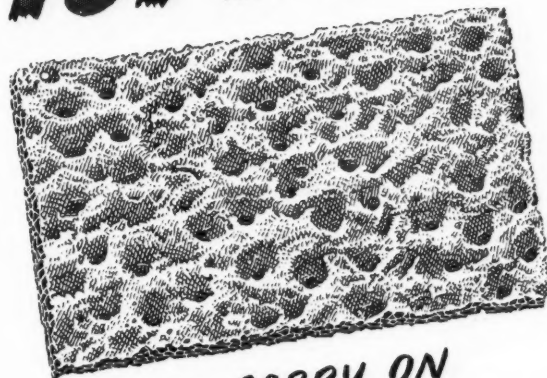
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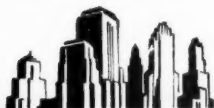
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